

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 100463
ORIGIN SS-25

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O P 040118Z MAY 77
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY MUSCAT IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY

S E C R E T STATE 100463

EXDIS, FOR AMBASSADOR FROM ATHERTON, LONDON FOR KINSOLVING

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MU, US

SUBJECT: MASIRAH ISLAND

REF: MUSCAT 688

1. INSTRUCTIONS STATE 62009 STILL APPLY IN HANDLING ANY
OMAN GOVERNMENT RESPONSE REGARDING CONTINUED USE OF
MASIRAH. WE HAVE HAD IN LAST FEW DAYS INDICATIONS IN U.S.
PRESS AND ELSEWHERE THAT OMANIS MAY BE CONTEMPLATING RE-
QUESTING PURCHASE OF SEVERAL C-130S AND MIGHT LOOK TO US
FOR FMS FINANCING. IF YOU SHOULD RECEIVE SUCH A REQUEST
BEFORE DEPARTURE, RESPOND SIMPLY THAT YOU WILL REPORT IT
TO WASHINGTON URGING A PROMPT ANSWER.

2. WE OF COURSE NEED AN OMANI RESPONSE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE
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ON FUTURE LANDING PRIVILEGES ON MASIRAH, BUT TACTICALLY
DO NOT WISH TO APPEAR TO BE URGENTLY PRESSING FOR AN
ANSWER. SUGGEST THAT IN LIGHT OF YOUR SCHEDULED DEPARTURE
MAY 9, YOU INQUIRE OF UNDER SECRETARY AL-ALAWI WHETHER
THERE IS ANY MESSAGE OMAN GOVERNMENT WISHES YOU TO CONVEY
WITH REGARD TO MASIRAH FLIGHTS DURING YOUR WASHINGTON
CONSULTATIONS. IF YOU ARE ABLE TO GET AUDIENCE WITH

SULTAN BEFORE DEPARTURE, YOU SHOULD TAKE THE SAME LINE WITH HIM.

3. UNDERSTAND YOUR CURRENT PLANS ARE TO BE IN LONDON MAY 10. I PLAN TO BE THERE ON THAT DAY ALSO AND COULD GET TOGETHER WITH YOU BRIEFLY TO DISCUSS STATUS OF MASIRAH. IN VIEW OF THE LOOSENESS OF FOREIGN MINISTER ZAWAWI'S TRAVEL PLANS, IS THERE A POSSIBILITY HE MIGHT STILL BE IN LONDON MAY 10? IF SO, ASSUME YOU WOULD WANT TO SEEK A CALL ON HIM IN ANY EVENT AND SUGGEST THAT IF AL-ALAWI CAN GIVE YOU NO RESPONSE ON MASIRAH PRIOR TO YOUR DEPARTURE, YOU INQUIRE OF HIM ABOUT RAISING THE QUESTION WITH ZAWAWI IN LONDON. I DO NOT THINK IT WOULD BE TACTICALLY HELPFUL FOR ME TO MEET WITH ZAWAWI IN LONDON IF WE ARE SEEKING TO AVOID GIVING IMPRESSION OF UNDUE ANXIETY ABOUT OMANI RESPONSE.

4. IN NEXT FEW DAYS WE WILL BE SENDING AN INITIAL REQUEST FOR SECOND QUARTER VISITS TO MASIRAH. EMBASSY SHOULD FORWARD IT TO OMAN GOVERNMENT UNDER DIPLOMATIC NOTE IN A ROUTINE, LOW-KEY MANNER.

5. FOR KINSOLVING: WHEN AMBASSADOR WOLLE SPECIFICALLY REQUESTS YOU TO DO SO, PLEASE INQUIRE ABOUT ZAWAWI'S PLANS AND SEEK TO ARRANGE FOR AMBASSADOR WOLLE TO CALL ON HIM MAY 10 IF THIS APPEARS DESIRABLE AND POSSIBLE.

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